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ABSTRACT

The newsletter is devoted to description of a 5-day conference on "Teaching Spanish to Southwest Hispanic Students" funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and held at New Mexico State University on July 14-19, 1993. It lists the middle and high school teachers from Arizona, California, New Mexico, Nevada, and Texas who participated, briefly describes the participant selection process, notes the kinds of programs from which the participants came, and summarizes the conference program. The central feature was presentations by eight experienced master teacher/consultants on theoretical and practical issues in teaching Spanish as a first language. Each gave a talk on current research and application in a particular area of specialization. These included: student placement; meeting individual students' affective and instructional needs; techniques for language maintenance and retrieval; pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities to use with Spanish literary texts students can relate to easily; activities using the functional-notional approach to developing language skills; creative group activities to explore opportunities to use Spanish outside the classroom; cooperative learning activities; and popular language use, language use apprehension, and codeswitching. Incorporating ethnographic studies into the curriculum is also discussed. Additional past and upcoming conference information is included. (MSE)

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Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers of Spanish

Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 1 | Spring 1994 | Las Cruces, N.M.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES
1993 SUMMER CONFERENCE
TEACHING SPANISH TO SOUTHWEST HISPANIC STUDENTS

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Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers of Spanish

Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 1 | Spring 1994 | Las Cruces, N.M.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES 1993 SUMMER CONFERENCE TEACHING SPANISH TO SOUTHWEST HISPANIC STUDENTS

A five day conference, "Teaching Spanish to Southwest Hispanic Students," funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, was sponsored by New Mexico State University on July 14 - 19, 1993. The conference was designed by Cecilia Rodríguez Pino of the Department of Languages and Linguistics at NMSU for thirty high school and middle school teachers from the eight-state region of the southwest.

The high school teachers who participated in the eight-hour-per-day conference were selected on the basis of the following criteria: minimum of three years' teaching experience in a foreign language classroom, commitment to develop materials at the conference, and willingness to classroom-test the materials during the academic year; and also be mentor teacher in their school district for inservice workshops and/or language conference presentations. The selection committee also gave preference to teachers whose questionnaire responses showed their district's pressing needs for native speaker instruction, and a letter of support from an administrator in their school or district office. The conference participants must also be assigned to teach in a middle school or high school foreign language or native speaker classroom during the 1993-94 academic year. The conference fellows received a $250 stipend in addition to five days per diem, books, materials and conference supplies.

The summer conference participants are listed below by state:

ARIZONA: Julia Hernández, South Mountain High School, Phoenix; Colleen Kane, Arcadia High School, Phoenix; Judith Kent, Amphitheater High School, Tucson; Lucy Linder, North High School, Phoenix; Pat Stewart, Miami High School, Miami.

CALIFORNIA: Peggy Blanton, Clovis West High School, Clovis; Esperanza Cobián, Silver Creek High School, San José; Laura Nuñez, Ray Kroc Middle School, San Diego; Rodolfo Orihuela, C.K. McClatchy High School, Sacramento; Irene Silvas, W.C. Overfelt High School, San José; Sonia Stroessner, Gunn High School, Palo Alto; Alicia Wilson, Buena High School, Ventura.

Consultants and participants take a break between sessions

NEW MEXICO: Felipe Avila, Gadsden Middle School, Anthony; Angela Ortiz Buckley, Sunland Park High School, Sunland Park; Barbara Perea Casey, Goddard High School, Roswell; Barbara Cottle, Hot Springs High School, Truth or Consequences; Eva Gallegos, Valley High School, Albuquerque; Martín Lueras, La Cueva High School, Albuquerque; Marta Morán, Oñate High School, Las Cruces; Alicia Fletcher, St. Pius High School, Albuquerque; Myrtelina Rael, Mora High School, Mora; Gail Lamendola, Pecos High School, Pecos.

NEVADA: Gordon Hale, Green Valley High School, Henderson; Catherine B. Hammelrath, Las Vegas High School, Las Vegas.

TEXAS: Annette Guerra, Clark High School, Plano; Viola Milán, San Jacinto Junior High School, Midland; Stella Reyna, Holmes High School, San Antonio; Lupe Rosas, Riverside High School, El Paso; María Zambrano, John Marshall High School, San Antonio.

Pre-Conference Background Knowledge

A few participants who attended the summer conference were from school districts where there are no language programs available for native speakers or who have never taught an SNS course and are very eager to develop a two-track system at their school. Several of the participants have taught in the native track sequence but some admitted that they did not receive formal theoretical and pedagogical instruction, have limited knowledge of dialect variation, and find that there is a lack of published materials to use with their diverse Spanish-speaking student population. All the participants were eager to learn new methods and approaches on how to design materials and units in the following areas: self-esteem, cultural identity, maintainance of the heritage language, literature that students can relate to, and integration of culturally relevant activities which have been passed on through generations. Some teachers expressed an interest in developing interdisciplinary materials appropriate for native speakers other than the available "canned" curriculum.

All the participants came to the conference with a strong desire and interest to work with other colleagues and develop materials to use in their school district and share with other teachers who are also in dire need of materials, methods and theories on the teaching of Spanish to native speakers.

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The Five Day Conference Program:

During the conference, eight experienced master teachers/consultants presented sessions on the theoretical and practical applications for teaching Spanish as a first language, not a foreign language. Each consultant gave a talk on current research and application in a particular area of specialization related to native speakers in the language classroom. A brief summary of each consultant's presentation, which is also available on videocassette, is given below.

Dr. Richard Teschner, Director of the Spanish for Native Speakers Program and co-author of two textbooks for native speakers, in his keynote address "After the Placement Test, What do We Do?," discussed the importance of language placement and assessment in the appropriate level of the sequence for the diverse population of Hispanics. The University of Texas at El Paso's Department of Modern and Classical Languages has developed a Language Placement and Assessment Test for students who enter the foreign and native language sequence. The computerized testing instrument has native speaker indicator items which will place students whose first language is Spanish in the appropriate course.

Patricia Morales Cano, professor of Spanish at Western New Mexico University at Silver City, discussed how important it is to meet both the affective and instructional needs of native speakers. Professor Cano emphasized that special attention be given to receptive bilinguals who wish to reclaim their heritage and lost language. Her session focused on the needs and priorities of each participant in their school district and offered professional suggestions to deal with the school administration to bring about changes in the SNS curriculum.

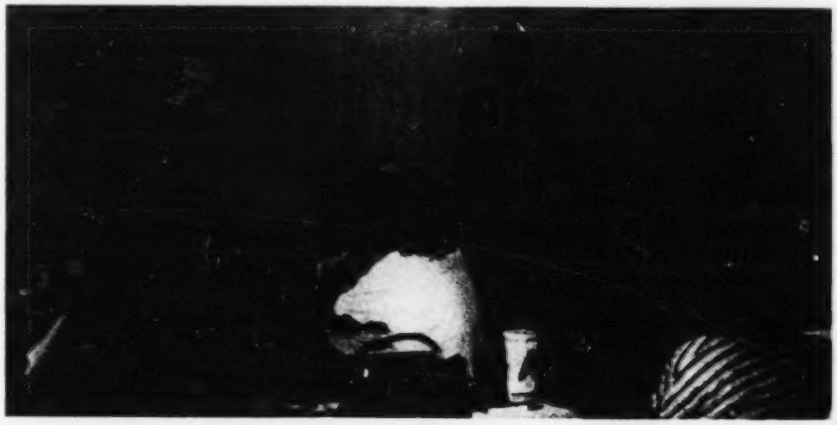
Dr. Nasario Garcia from New Mexico Highlands University at Las Vegas mentioned strategies and techniques for language maintenance and retrieval. He discussed Joshua Fishman's theories which emphasize the need to set language goals that are oriented toward the smaller societal units such as families, neighborhoods, and towns. Dr. Garcia's advice is to design speaking activities that create a friendship network and an ethnic bond to maintain the language, culture and literature.

Dr. Ricardo Aguilar Melantzón, professor at New Mexico State University and literary prize winning novelist, in collaboration with the project director, designed pre-reading, reading and post-reading activities to use with Chicano literature, or other Spanish literary texts that Hispanic students can relate to. During his session, Dr. Aguilar emphasized the importance of students "being involved in the text" through a variety of speaking, writing and listening activities as well as reading in which they will not only reflect on the material, but how it affects their own personal lives, the lives of others and the human condition in general. For his session on literature, Dr. Aguilar compiled a bibliography of Chicano short stories and other literary texts appropriate for middle school and high school students. Each participant received a copy of his novel Madreselvas en Flor and participated in listening, speaking, reading and writing activities designed for the session to show how the activities can be used in a student-centered classroom so teachers can receive feedback on various aspects of the activities. The participants' feedback as students in the listening and writing activities demonstrated that the diverse functional levels of students in the classroom can be more addressed with activities that allow them to voice their opinions about the literature. The teachers who participated as students were put in the position to reflect on their personal experience with the segment from Madreselvas en Flor, but also on prior literacy and personal experiences. Professor Aguilar also encouraged the participants to write their own short stories.

Dr. Aguilar has recently edited a collection of Chicano short stories Cuento Chicano del Siglo XX Breve Antología which includes one of Rodolfo Anaya's short stories "El Velorio" among other internationally known Chicano authors. Copies of this valuable collection are on sale. Contact Dr. Ricardo Aguilar at the Department of Languages and Linguistics at New Mexico State University.

Dr. George Blanco, professor at the University of Texas at Austin offered examples of activities using the functional/notional approach to develop students' languages proficiency in the four skills. His expertise in the area of methodology for teaching Spanish to native speakers as opposed to teaching it as a foreign language involves designing thematic units incorporating functions such as analyzing, imparting information, describing, narrating, etc. His program emphasizes that Hispanic students can already function at a higher level than their non-native counterparts and a well-structured curriculum must be designed to promote and further develop their existing functional proficiency in the language. To motivate students, one must emphasize meaning first, and form must have a secondary role. De-emphasize formal grammar study since it does not really utilize the students' functional ability in Spanish. A copy of his publication Español para el hispanohablantes: Función y nocion was given to each participant to help them design units according to the needs of their programs.

Dr. Barbara Merino, professor at the University of California at Davis, described numerous creative ways a teacher can design group activities to explore how students in this generation can use their Spanish outside of the classroom. Dr. Merino formed groups and distributed southwestern regional dictionaries to the participants for "el juego de los diccionarios" to awaken in each student the notion that we live in a very active language community and should value all our Hispanic dialects. We must avoid telling native speakers that their dialect variants are incorrect. She offered many other language activities such as the use of ethnographic and sociolinguistic studies students can conduct both in and out



James Halligan, President of New Mexico State University welcomes consultants and paticipants.

A visit to historic Mesilla. Consultants: Aguilar, García, de León, Merino, Cano (back), Pino, de Barling and Angela Lovino, NEH evaluator

of class, and oral history projects with their family members. Dr. Merino gave invaluable guidelines on how to develop a sample lesson with a statement of philosophy, the theoretical framework, criteria for the module and evaluation of the material unit. Each participant also received several chapters of her manuscript which she co-edited with Henry Trueba and Fabian Samaniego, Language and Culture in Learning: Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers of Spanish. The book is 1994 Falmer Press publication and offers both theory and practice with articles that include linguistic, anthropological, sociological, foreign language and pedagogical studies.

Ana Maria de Barling, Spanish teacher at Lynnbrook and Cupertino High schools in Santa Clara, California, presented many strategies and suggestions for using cooperative learning activities in the native speakers classroom to develop a sense of membership and ownership in the group's activity and its results. The cooperative activities promote the sense of positive interdependence but yet without the personal participation of each member of the group the task cannot be accomplished. She discussed that cooperative activities allow students with diverse backgrounds to contribute to the completion of a group project through interaction, cooperation, and collaboration.

Dr. Laura Gutiérrez Spencer, professor at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, also presented many language activities and handouts in which students can actively use "popularismos" in class. Dr. Spencer, along with the rest of the consultants, emphasized the importance of building each student's self esteem in class in order to have a successful classroom environment. The activities designed by Professor Spencer allow the students to codeswitch and use their own language variations in class. She stated that "it is more important that students use their home language in class rather than to be quiet all semester and never improve their language for fear of making errors." Her opinion echoed the sentiments of many participants at the conference who had felt that their language variants were "incorrect" and were relieved to hear other professors identified with their fears.

Time was allowed for discussions and work in groups to prepare thematic unit outlines that the participants would develop throughout the academic year and classroom test. In the short time they had, the participants developed six thematic unit outlines which they felt would make students aware of their cultural pride and heritage, self worth, and preparation for their future profession. Each group proceeded to develop a five-day unit on the following themes: (1) Investigación de Raíces Familiares; (2) La Narrativa Personal; (3) De Cajas de Cartón a Maletas; (4) Prejuicios a través de la Moda; (5) Las Carreras; and (6) El Inmigrante. In the thematic outlines it is evident that grammar is not the main focus. A high degree of interaction through pair, group and class work as well as out-of-class activities which apply the interview process are incorporated into the unit. Throughout the academic year, the participants have been fine-tuning the activities, implementing them in class and asking for student feedback, their reactions to the materials and the evaluation process. Several of the units will be highlighted and distributed at two conferences in the Spring. At the Southwest Conference on Language Teaching at Salt Lake City, Utah on April 22, the project director and a participant, Gordon Hale from Las Vegas, Nevada, will present a session. The project director will also present a session at the University of California at Davis on May 20.

It is hoped that this brief description of the NEH Summer Conference will give teachers and administrators an idea of the great need and importance to develop curricula that truly addresses the native speakers of Spanish. It was deemed important by all participants and consultants at this conference that we must all play a major role in continuing to design theoretically and pedagogically sound materials and document our experiences through teacher research. Many of the strategies designed for this conference have not been explored sufficiently enough to document the degree of success in class. The preparation of many instructional materials that have not published need much attention by other enthusiastic teachers like the participants and consultants who worked together at the five-day conference with the valuable support of the National Endowment for the Humanities to focus on the Spanish for Native Speakers profession.

Cecilia Rodríguez Pino accepts conference logo designed by Rodolfo Orihuela, participant

The logo design for the NEH Conference Summer 1993

ENTHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES IN THE SNS PROGRAM

Cecilia Rodríguez Pino

During the "Teaching Spanish to Southwest Hispanic Students" conference many activities were presented for the purpose of maintaining or retrieving the native language. Several strategies were proposed for instructional purposes in SNS programs that have as a main objective to "connect the student with their heritage language and culture in contextualized and interactive activities." One method which has been effectively used to obtain cultural information is the use of ethnography. It has been implemented among the social sciences and applied disciplines and can be applied to the Spanish for native speakers classes. Barbara Merino, a consultant in the summer conference suggested that it can be a beginning stepping stone in the SNS program for interacting and participating in structured activities to study the local culture and language.

During the past academic year, the SNS classes at New Mexico State University have been exploring the use of the ethnographic study using community resources. Some of the participants have also applied ethnography to their thematic units and a sample activity will be included for the middle school Spanish classes.

As a starting point of the activity, the students are introduced to the definition of the study of ethnography and what role it plays in research of their native language and culture using the following definition:

> Ethnography is a method used to obtain cultural information from the native's point of view to explore how people within the target culture group and prioritize their language experiences. The field work done involves learning from people through an inside account of the culture and grasping the native's point of view and his/her relation to life, realizing that person's vision of the world. Ethnography takes place in a "real world" environment using techniques that do not prestructure or precategorize what is to be observed.

According to Gail Robinson (1988), there aren't any good ethnographies of cultures commonly taught in American schools that are relevant to our local communities and societies. Ethnography can be an important first step for students in the SNS classroom to record accounts about our own culture so that we may describe, interpret and evaluate events that have not been recorded or documented anywhere in rich and vivid detail. It is a profoundly important tool for obtaining information of the cultural diversity of the Hispanic population's language and culture with background data from native speaker's points of view given to native speaker student researchers.

Barbara Merino in her Ethnographic Interview Protocol suggested four major areas of inquiry to obtain information on the social and cultural home and community environment:
(1) community (2) home (3) school and (4) self. As a starting point of the ethnographic study design, the class can divide into groups and "brainstorm" with the instructor, giving a brief historical, social and cultural background of the community and surrounding areas. The teacher can suggest potential informants to interview on certain topics or students can volunteer their grandparents. It is surprising how many relatives can give detailed accounts of the Mexican revolution, immigrating to the United States 50 years ago, migrant worker experiences or rasing sixteen children and living off the land.

To design the interview questions, students are instructed to ask questions that will elicit many descriptive details about the location the event took place. Students must ask descriptive questions that will give them practice in becoming creative listeners in an authentic setting, a skill not taught in the artificial setting of the classroom. This type of question encourages the informants to give information on the cultural scene and gives the student ethnographer an inside look on where the action took place from the informant's point of departure. Sample question: Please describe to me in as much detail as possible the place where you grew up.

Another follow-up question will expand on aspects of the experiences in the locale and will get the informant into the sequence of events or time period. Time, space, events, people, activities or objects can be used to formulate questions that result in a verbal description of significant features of the culture, scene or experience. "Mini-tour" questions can then be asked about major or important accounts for eliciting rich descriptions of a specific event. The process can be repeated to ask about other experiences mentioned in the description.

Felipe Avila, Gadsden Middle School teacher, designed a unit "Raíces Familiares" and used the ethnographic interview for his students to design questions to ask relatives where their family originated from. Below is a summarized activity from his unit.

LA GENEALOGIA: INVESTIGACION DE RAICES FAMILIARES

Felipe Avila, Gadsden Middle School
Seventh and Eighth Grade Classes

Filosofía:
El objetivo es para que los estudiantes sobresalgan académicamente al igual que socialmente tienen que tener un buen concepto e imagen de sí mismo. El propósito de esta actividad es desarrollar el autoestima de los studiantes por medio del conocimiento de sus raíces familiares.

Procedimiento:

1. Los estudiantes participarán dando palabras familiares al profesor: (maternal, paternal, nombre de pila, padrastro, madrastra, etc.)
2. El profesor escribe las palabras en el pizarron y los estudiantes copian los términos.
3. Hay discusión sobre el significado de los términos.
4. Se forman preguntas para entrevistar a un familiar de la genealogía.
5. Se forma preguntas dirigidas principalmente al origen geográfico.
6. El estudiante entrevista a los familiares usando las preguntas.
7. Con la información obtenida, el estudiante construye un mapa geográfico de su familia. Se usa un color distinto para trazar las raíces de cada persona en la familia
8. Se muestran todos los mapas en la clase para que todos los estudiantes vean las distintas raíces de cada uno.

Observaciones del maestro:
En esta actividad se incluyó la familia del estudiante que fue lo más importante porque toda la información que contribuyeron fue aceptada. Todo fue positivo y se le notaba al estudiante un orgullo de su trabajo que había logrado utilizando su familia para recibir una clasificación

favorable. Como se le dió la opción de entrevistar al familiar que quisiera, esta actividad no tuvo reacción negativa hacia los estudiantes que no tienen mamá o papá.

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Other ethnographic activities are included in the units designed by the NEH Conference participants. Sample units will be distributed at the Southwest Conference on Language Teaching session in Salt Lake City, Utah. For more information contact the Project Director, Cecilia Rodríguez Pino.

And many more Activities for SNS Classes . . .

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SNS Conferences

1993-94 PAST SNS CONFERENCES

El Español en los Estados Unidos 14, The Language of the U. S. Hispanics: Challenging Policies and Paradigns Conference was held October 8 - 10 at the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio, Texas. Sessions on teaching Spanish to native speakers were presented by George Blanco, U.T. Austin, "Usemos el sentido común en la enseñanza del español al hispanohablante;" Cecilia Rodríguez Pino, New Mexico State, "Un acercamiento al desarrollo de un programa de estudio para hispanohablantes universitarios;" and featured speaker Ana Celia Zentella, Hunter College and CUNY School of Graduate Studies, "Families, Parents and Language in Bilingual Communities." For more information on the 1994 conference contact Anthony Lozano, University of Colorado at Boulder.

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages ACTFL Conference, also held in San Antonio, Texas, November 20-22, had a record number of sessions on SNS: George Blanco conducted a workshop sponsored by Heinle and Heinle Publishers on "The Use of Authentic Materials in Teaching Spanish for the Spanish Speaker" and a presentation "Do Spanish Speakers Really Know Grammar?" A panel discussion "Trends in Spanish for Spanish Speakers" was also sponsored by Heinle and Heinle featuring Rosa Fernández, University of New Mexico, George Blanco, and Aida Walqui of Alisal High School, California. For future workshops and presentations in your area on the subject of SNS write to: Heinle and Heinle Publishers, 20 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116.

Other presenters at ACTFL were Lucy Linder and Olmanda Brown, Phoenix, Arizona, "Spanish for Native Speakers — Language Arts;" Cecilia Colombi and Francisco Alarcón, University of California at Davis, "Spanish as a Native Tongue: Praxis and Theory;" Ana Roca, Florida International University, Lucía Caycedo Garner, University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Margarita Hidalgo, San Diego State University, "Spanish Speakers at the University Level: Needs and Solutions;" Cecilia Rodríguez Pino, NMSU, and Nasario García, Highlands University, Las Vegas, NM, "Teaching Spanish to Southwest Hispanic Students: 1993 NEH Summer Conference Highlights." A special session on Spanish for Native Speakers will be included in the 1994 ACTFL Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Third Annual University of New Mexico Conference on Ibero-American Culture and Society "Hispanic Language and Social Identity" was held Febraury 10 - 12 in Albuquerque. Saturday was devoted completely to Spanish for Native Speakers sessions. Plenary speaker Eduardo Hernández Chávez from the University of New Mexico spoke on "La pérdida del español entre los chicanos: Sus raíces sociopolíticas y las consecuencias para la identidad cultural." For more information on next year's conference contact Dr. Garland Bills at the Department of Modern and Classical Languages, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM.

CALENDAR OF 1994 SPRING AND SUMMER CONFERENCES WITH SESSIONS ON SPANISH FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS

The Southwest Conference on Language Teaching will hold its annual conference in Utah on April 21-23, 1994. Salt Lake City will host "Soar in '94: Reaching New Heights in Language Education" at the Red Lion Hotel. Several sessions on Spanish for Native Speakers are in the conference program:

Workshop #4 "El Hispanohablante del Año 2000: ¿Ya es hora de que el hispanohablante sea un bilingüe total" by Ana María de Barbieri, Professor of Spanish, West Valley College, Saratoga, CA; Margaret Azevedo, Palo Alto High School; Jaime Calderon, Stanford, California.

Workshop #7 "Destrezas Básicas Efectivas Para El Desarrollo De La Composición En El Estudiante Hispanohablante," Olmanda Brown, Central High School, Phoenix, Arizona.

Session #10 "Rating Native Speakers' Spoken Spanish," Barbara Gonzalez Pino, University of Texas at San Antonio.

Session #18 "Teaching Spanish to Southwest Hispanic Students: Highlights of the NEH 1993 Summer Conference," Cecilia Rodriguez Pino, NMSU, and Gordon Hale, Ed. W. Clark High School, Las Vegas, Nevada.

For more information contact Joann Pompa, SWCOLT Executive Director, Mountain Point High School, 410 E. Knox Rd., Phoenix, Arizona 85044.

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A conference "Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers in the U.S.: Praxis and Theory" will be held at the University of California at Davis on May 19-21, 1994. For more information contact: Dr. Cecilia Colombi, Chair of the TSNS Organizing Committee, Spanish and Classics Department, University of California at Davis, California 95616. (916) 752-1244, Bitnet: cmcolombi@ucdavis.edu.

The American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) has added a bellwether session "Teaching Spanish to Native Speakers" to their '94 annual meeting in Philadelphia, PA in August; Presenters will be Dr. Guadalupe Valdés, University of Berkeley and Stanford University; Dr. Ana Roca, Florida International in Miami; and Cecilia Rodríguez Pino, New Mexico State University For more information contact: Dr. Lynn Sandstedt, AATSP Executive Director, Dept. of Hispanic Studies, University of Colorado at Greeley Colorado 80630.

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